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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An advance notification system and method notifies users of the impending arrival of a transportation vehicle, for example, a school bus, at a particular vehicle stop. The system generally includes an on-board vehicle control unit (VCU) for each vehicle and a base station control unit (BSCU) for transmitting notification messages to users in order to inform the users when the vehicle is a certain predefined time period away from the vehicle stop. The VCU compares elapsed time and/or traveled distance to the programmed schedule time and/or traveled distance to determine if the vehicle is on schedule. If the vehicle is behind or ahead of schedule, the VCU calls the BSCU, which then adjusts its calling schedule accordingly. Significantly, a preset notification time period mechanism in the BSCU permits the user to contact the BSCU in order to define a preset notification time period when the user is to receive a notification message prior to arrival of a vehicle at a vehicle stop to thereby indicate impending arrival of the vehicle at the stop.